

## ADOPTED 2005 BUDGET

DEPT: MILWAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

UNIT NO. 1908  
FUND: General - 0001

### OPERATING AUTHORITY & PURPOSE

Pursuant to Section 59.56(5) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the County Board may appropriate money to any historical society located in the County and incorporated under Section 44.03 for the purpose of collecting and preserving the records and salient historical features of the County. This unit maintains the historical exhibits of the Milwaukee County Historical Society and assists with other phases of the program. Funds provided to subsidize the

operation of the Society are used to employ a director and associate staff. The Society acts as custodian for non-current County records. The County appropriates funds for use by the Society pursuant to an agreement approved by the County Board of Supervisors on December 14, 1965 and renewed on May 16, 1988.

BUDGET SUMMARY			
	2003 Actual	2004 Budget	2005 Budget
Property Tax Levy Contribution to Milwaukee County Historical Society	\$ 276,733	\$ 242,550	\$ 242,550

### OVERVIEW OF OPERATION

The Historical Society's total operating budget for 2005 amounts to \$688,733, with \$446,183 to come from private, non-County funds. Sources include membership fees (individual and corporate), bequests, gifts, grants, income from invested funds, and sales and receipts from public programs.

Following are examples of some of the Historical Society's program activities.

1. Outcomes: The Historical Society experienced substantial increases in several areas of operation. Most notably, visits to the Historical Society's website increased by 440%, rising from 15,403 in 2002 to 67,795 in 2003 as a result of the addition of a Milwaukee history timeline to the site. Overall participation in all public programming offered by the Historical Society also increased from 26,467 in 2002 to 31,425 in 2003 – a rise of 18%. This included a small increase in attendance at the Historical Center and an impressive 48% increase in general visitation to the Society's historic homes. Conversely, while tour group attendance at the historic homes declined, group tours of the Historical Center increased by 208% from 1,748 to 3,623. Small declines in attendance at special events and off-site programs were more than offset by 1,120 new visitors attending rental

events and nearly 1,000 additional guests visiting the Society during Wednesday evening River Rhythm concerts throughout the summer. Only inquiries to the Research Library declined substantially, falling from 5,057 to 4,510. This decrease in library inquiries was, however, more than offset by an increase in use of the Historical Society's website described above.

2. Diversity: The Historical Society was especially successful in bringing exhibitions and programs highlighting cultural diversity to Milwaukee County during 2003. In February, the Society was one of only 50 institutions nationwide selected to premiere the HBO Documentary *Unchained Memories: Readings from the Slave Narratives*, produced in cooperation with the Library of Congress. In March, the Society opened the nationally touring version of the exhibition *Freedom: A History of US*, sponsored by GE Medical and in September, the Historical Society hosted the exhibition *Every Picture Tells A Story: The Photographs of Ernest Withers*. Organized and sponsored by Northern Trust Bank, the exhibition featured the images of the Memphis-based photographer who documented the music of Beale Street, the Negro Baseball League and the Civil Rights Movement.
3. Collections: The Historical Society acquired several significant new collections during 2003.

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These included the papers of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Milwaukee, a wide range of documents, images and artifacts from Allen-Bradley / Rockwell Automation, archival materials from Bank One; and the collection of 75,000 historic photographs of Milwaukee County assembled by John Angelos and Marilyn Johnson. A major grant of \$45,000 from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation enabled the Society to purchase the Angelos / Johnson Collection.

4. Publications. During 2003, the Historical Society published its fifth new book. In February, the Society released Mary Kellogg Rice's *Useful Work for Unskilled Women: A Unique Milwaukee WPA Project* which documented the highly successful Depression-era program to employ women who had never been part of the workforce. One of the earliest programs to be fully integrated, the Milwaukee WPA Project became a national model and drew a visit from First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. *Useful Work* was recently awarded the Wisconsin Historical Society's Award of Merit.
5. Changing Exhibitions: During 2003, several changing exhibitions were presented at the Historical Center recognizing Milwaukee County corporations and institutions that celebrated significant anniversaries. These included *Workshores of Commerce: Harley Davidson Delivery Vehicles*; *The Milwaukee Mile: A Centennial Celebration*; *A New School in a New Century*; *Milwaukee School of Engineering*; *Making A Difference: The Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, 1887 – 2003*; and *the Milwaukee Turners: 150 Years of Service*. In addition, the Society mounted an exhibition on the WPA Handicraft Project at the time Mary Kellogg Rice's book *Useful Work for the Unskilled Women* was released. Another exhibition, *Quilts and Community*, showcased bed covers from the permanent collection in conjunction with the *Quilts of Gee's Bend* exhibit presented by the Milwaukee Art Museum.
6. Public Programming: The Society and its Friends organization continue to sponsor public programs on a variety of topics. During 2003, the Society hosted its 50th Anniversary Recognition Banquet at the Wisconsin Club, drawing record attendance of 340 people and presenting awards to a record 17 individuals and organizations.
- The Friends of the Milwaukee County Historical Society continued their expanded programming schedule during 2003, presenting a special event almost every month. Among these were tours of the Public Service Building, the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, and the Wisconsin Lake Schooner, as well as the Third Annual Historic House Tour. For the second consecutive year, the Friends made a donation of \$10,000 to the Society based upon the proceeds of their programs.
7. County Landmarks: Since 1976, the Historical Society has operated, under County ordinance, a landmark recognition program for areas of Milwaukee County outside the City of Milwaukee. Nearly 90 sites have been designated as landmarks throughout the history of the program. During 2003, the Landmark Committee added three properties to its list of County Landmarks including the Oak Creek Dam in South Milwaukee, the Thomas Benjamin Hart House in Wauwatosa and the Highway 100 Bypass surrounding Milwaukee County.
8. Museum Houses: During 2003, all three of the period homes operated by the Historical Society were open to the public. The Historical Society completed restoration of the deteriorating foundation and sagging north wall of the Lowell Damon House in Wauwatosa during 2003 with financial support approaching \$30,000 from the Bruhnke Fund of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. In addition, Janean Mollet, a graduate student from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee utilized archeological materials from the excavations at the Jeremiah Curtin House in Greendale as the basis for her Master's thesis on 19th century children's toys. New shutters were also fabricated by volunteers to replace those at the Kilbourn House in Estabrook Park.

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The Milwaukee County Historical Society was founded in 1935 to collect, preserve and make available materials relating to the history of Milwaukee County. Through a broad program, the Society seeks to promote a greater appreciation of the community's rich heritage and a better understanding of present-day challenges and advantages. The Society's library and museum collections, exhibitions and activities serve a variety of constituencies including scholars, students, genealogists, local businesses and organizations and Milwaukee County residents and visitors.

**BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Department of Administrative Services (DAS)-Fiscal Affairs will evaluate professional service contracts (e.g., janitorial services, printing, etc.) and facilitate collaboration between the Historical Society and other County supported entities to negotiate shared contracts. DAS-Fiscal Affairs will require the agency to monitor and report any savings. Anticipated savings will be realized in future budgets.

The County Historical Society spends the County's contribution as follows:

	2003 Actual	2004 Budget	2005 Budget
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Personal Services	\$ 206,933	\$ 179,260	\$ 183,250
Space and Utilities	67,265	67,265	59,300
Office and Administrative Supplies	2,535	2,535	2,535
Undistributed Reduction	0	(6,510)	0
Total Expenditures	\$ 276,733	\$ 242,550	\$ 245,085

**ACTIVITY AND STATISTICAL SUMMARY**

	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Budget	2005 Budget
Meetings/Public Programs	10	10	25	15
Organizational Members	1,208	1,157	1,400	1,500
Research Requests:	5,057	4,510	6,250	5,500
Library - In Person	1,950	1,452	2,500	2,500
Telephone	1,893	1,743	2,250	2,000
Mail/E-mail	1,214	1,316	1,500	1,750
Public Attendance	26,467	31,425	40,000	40,000
Guided Tours:				
Historical Center	87	96	120	120
Period Homes	26	22	50	60
Accessions:				
Library	110	93	135	125
Museum	44	33	100	50
Pages of Publication	324	224	192	150
Staff Program Presentations	31	34	35	40
Slide Shows/Media Appearances	8	14	20	15
Website Visits	15,403	67,795	60,000	100,000